

CURRENT TOPICS

THE APPOINTMENT of Assistant Secretary Barnes to be postmaster at Washington is not popular among the "old inhabitants." The Washington Star, usually found on the side of the administration, prints this editorial: "The carnival of crime continues in the District. Last night the wife of a policeman was robbed while passing through Rock Creek Park. This assailant took long chances, for the woman was armed, but her aim was poor. This morning an Anacostia woman on returning home from market was grappled by a robber in her own house and robbed of a considerable sum of money. No arrests have yet been made in these cases. Meanwhile thirty-eight policemen remain on duty at the White House. And the major and superintendent of police and the remnants of his force are still engaged in scouring the city and country for evidence with which to blacken the character of Mrs. Minor Morris, in order that the president's assistant secretary may be whitewashed and railroaded into office as the postmaster of Washington. The situation is altogether significant."

SENATOR TILLMAN has introduced a resolution instructing the District of Columbia committee to investigate the connection of the police with the ejection of Mrs. Morris and to ascertain whether the superintendent of police undertook to make an investigation "concerning the previous life and reputation of Mrs. Morris, and especially to inquire whether the superintendent of police and one of the chief witnesses against Mrs. Morris have since then received recognition by the appointment of near relatives to office, and whether any laws should be adopted by congress for the better regulation and improvement of the police force of the city of Washington." The Washington correspondent for the New York World says: "The appointments referred to are those of a son of Richard Sylvester, superintendent of police, and the son of a newspaper correspondent, who was the only eye-witness giving testimony favorable to Mr. Barnes, who were appointed cadets to the military academy at West Point. It is said these appointments were made February 7."

MIDDLE AGED AMERICANS will remember the air to which the London Daily Mail refers when it says: "Forty years ago every barrel organ in London was jiggling to the tune of 'Champagne Charlie,' and George Leybourne, alias Joe Saunders, a whiskered 'swell' who drove to his music hall in a carriage with four horses, sang 'Champagne Charlie' night after night to delighted thousands. Those were the days of the Great Vance and Alfred Lloyd, when he who now calls himself an 'artiste' or a 'serio' was a 'Lion comique,' and then everybody knew the name of Mr. Alfred Lee. Now the famous Mr. Alfred Lee is dead at a great age, and men past middle age must be reminded that he was the composer of 'Champagne Charlie.' The last generation is no wiser for the reminder, for the song died long before its maker."

THE TERMS OF twenty-nine governors expire this year or early in 1907, and their successors must be chosen before the end of the year. The Philadelphia Public Ledger says: "Oregon will elect a successor to Governor G. E. Chamberlain on June 4. The Arkansas state election will be held on September 1, Vermont's on September 4, Maine's on September 10, Georgia's on October 3 and Kentucky's on November 5. The other states choosing state officers will elect them on November 6, at the same time representatives in congress are chosen. The states that elect governors this year, with the names of the retiring executives are: Alabama, W. D. Jenks, democrat; Arkansas, Jefferson Davis, democrat; California, G. C. Pardee, democrat; Colorado, J. F. McDonald, republican; Connecticut, Henry Roberts, republican; Georgia, J. M. Terrell, democrat; Idaho, F. R. Gooding, republican; Iowa, A. B. Cummins, republican; Kansas, E. W. Hoch, republican; Kentucky, J. C. W. Beckham, democrat; Maine, William T. Cobb, republican; Massachusetts, Curtis Guild, Jr., republican; Michigan, F. M. Warner, republican; Minnesota, J. A. Johnson, democrat; Nebraska, J. H. Mickey,

republican; Nevada, John Sparks, democrat; New Hampshire, John McLane, republican; New York, F. W. Higgins, republican; North Dakota, E. Y. Searles, republican; Oregon, G. E. Chamberlain, democrat; Pennsylvania, S. W. Pennypacker, republican; Rhode Island, George H. Uiter, republican; South Carolina, D. C. Heyward, democrat; South Dakota, S. H. Elrod, republican; Tennessee, John I. Cox, democrat; Texas, S. W. Lanham, democrat; Vermont, Charles J. Bell, republican; Wisconsin, J. O. Davidson, republican; Wyoming, B. B. Brooks, republican."

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE, editor of the Emporia Gazette, has practically bolted the republican ticket in Kansas. Mr. White intimates that Governor Hoch loaned the name of the state of Kansas to the M. K. and T. railroad's suit in the Indian Territory on condition that John Madden, an old friend of the governor, be made general attorney for the railroad. Governor Hoch says: "It is true that John Madden is a personal friend of mine, and he has been for many years. It is true that I indorsed him for the position he now holds, as well as for a dozen others, and I hope to indorse him for many if he and I live long enough. But this suit will not cost the state of Kansas one penny. I allowed the name of the state to be used because I believe that such a suit is necessary to settle the rights of the people who have taken up this land in Indian Territory and who are living upon it now as well as to ascertain what claims the railroad company has to the land."

THE UNITED STATES supreme court recently rendered an important decision affecting divorce proceedings. The court holds that a divorce issued to a person when the defendant to the action is a non-resident of the state where the decree is granted is illegal. Under this decision persons may not, for instance, by going to South Dakota, remaining there for a certain time according to state law, obtain a divorce unless both parties are residents of that state. The court stood five to four, Justice White speaking for the court, and Justice Brown delivering a dissenting opinion in which Justices Brown, Harlan and Brewer concurred. Justice Holmes dissented but read an independent dissenting opinion.

THE CASE UPON which the supreme court acted was that of John W. Haddock against Harriet Haddock. It came up on appeal from the New York courts. The Haddocks were married in 1868. The husband claimed to have been an unwilling participant in the ceremony. He says in his answer to the woman's complaint that he left her immediately after the marriage rites were performed, and during all the time that has intervened has seen her only three times. In 1881 he secured a divorce in Connecticut, where he then resided, and in 1882 was married there to another woman. The New York supreme court held the second marriage to be illegal and decreed the first wife to be still the legal wife, and directed Haddock to pay her an annuity of \$780. That finding was sustained by the decision, which held that Mrs. Haddock was without the jurisdiction of the Connecticut court.

IT IS ESTIMATED that at least 20,000 children are affected by the opinion of the supreme court, these being the offspring of marriage based on divorces granted where but one of the parties resided in the state. In their dissenting opinion Justices Brown and Holmes spoke very earnestly, Justice Brown saying: "I regret that the court in this case has taken what seems to me a step backward in American jurisprudence and has virtually returned to the old doctrine of comity which it was the very object of the full faith and credit clause of the constitution to supersede." Justice Holmes said: "I do not suppose that civilization will come to an end whichever way this case is decided; but as the reasoning which prevails in the mind of the majority does not convince me, and as I think that the decision not only reverses a previous well-considered decision of this court, but is likely to cause considerable disaster to innocent persons

and to bastardize children hitherto supposed to be the offspring of legal marriage, I think it proper to express my views." Justice Holmes quoted from the case of Atherton vs. Atherton, a New York-Kentucky case, which he said had been reversed by this decision.

THE PUBLIC IS considerably stirred by the supreme court's decision affecting divorces, and newspapers generally demand that steps be taken to provide a remedy for the situation. The New York World, for instance, says: "The decision of the United States supreme court in the Haddock divorce case impresses once more the imperative necessity of divorce law reform and uniformity of practice between the states. If all those divorces are invalid which have been obtained by the haphazard methods which the court condemns, then the present status of thousands of women and children is most unfortunate, property questions of great complexity are raised and society is needlessly shocked and disturbed in regard to a matter upon which it is most sensitive. The confusion of the laws which permits three times as many divorces to be granted in Chicago as in New York, which recognizes no cause in one state, only one cause in another and in half a dozen states almost any cause, is bad enough without the confusion of the technical rules as to actual residence and procedure."

IT IS GENERALLY agreed by newspaper writers that Thomas W. Lawson was one of the gentlemen whom Mr. Roosevelt had in mind when he delivered his famous "muck rake" speech. Newspaper dispatches say that Mr. Lawson bubbled over with smiles after reading the president's Standard Oil message. Mr. Lawson gave out the following facetious statement: "The fully attended meeting of the American Muck Rakers' association, hastily called at noon today for the purpose of listening to the special message of its supreme mentor, President Theodore Roosevelt, accepted my unanimously requested resignation as president, to which office our ideal was at once elected for a life term. A notification committee left for Washington tonight to present the president with his new honors and to secure his approval of the new standard rake which was adopted at today's meeting. The new rake differs from the old only in the increased length of handle and the substitution of automatic teeth, the number of which has been increased four times over any heretofore used by the association. It was also voted at today's meeting to suspend all raking for ninety days, or until the miasmites created by the president's rake be concreted. The association's experts submitted analyses and figures to the effect that such concreting would be sufficient to pave the highways and byways of hell with an ebonized coating twenty-seven feet in depth, and of gutta percha consistency. At the first reading of the president's message two of the most talented members of the association succumbed to apoplectic fits. After the meeting adjourned five others, who had been wrestling with the green monster, were similarly affected, while a large number of others wired the Standard Oil for 'the hook.' The meeting broke up late in the evening with the singing of the hymn:

Muck-rakers we;
We dig and we delve,
From midnight till twelve,
In muck and in mire,
In slush and in fire,
Dis-in-ter-est-ed-ly.

DO THE PEOPLE of Texas and of the south generally desire to have Senator Bailey made the presidential nominee of the democratic party in 1908? This is the question propounded by the Washington correspondent for the Houston (Texas) Post. That correspondent adds: "If they do and are willing to show it at this time, careful students of the political situation say that Mr. Bailey can certainly be nominated. His performances in the senate during the present session of congress have added to his already enviable reputation in such a way as to make him easily the leading democratic figure in congress, if not in the whole United States. It is always